

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00952 111610Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-06 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 /094 W
-----111613Z 025042 /45

R 111438Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5382
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USUN NEW YORK 1234

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0952

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR RH ZA UK
SUBJ: TIMES OF ZAMBIA SEES LITTLE OF VALUE IN OWEN VISIT TO
SOUTHERN AFRICA

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. TIMES OF ZAMBIA EDITORIAL APRIL 11 DESCRIBES THE VISIT
OF FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN TO SOUTHERN AFRICA AS ANOTHER ATTEMPT
AT SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY WHICH HAS PROVED SO FRUITLESS IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA. EDITORIAL SAYS THAT UNLESS OWEN IS COMING WITH A TRUMP
CARD UP HIS SLEEVE HIS VISIT SHOULD BE GREETED "WITH A BIG
AND LARGE YAWN".

2. OWEN'S TRIP IS SEEN AS A PART OF WESTERN REACTION TO
THE CASTRO AND PODGORNÝ VISITS. EDITORIAL ADMONISHES OWN
THAT AN OFFER OF ANOTHER ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE
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TREATED WITH CONTEMPT. A RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IS
ONLY POSSIBLE IF THERE IS AN ASSURANCE THAT SMITH WILL NOT
BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUY MORE TIME. SMITH HAS THWARTED
PREVIOUS WESTERN INITIATIVES WITH IMPUNITY, AND TO PREVENT
A REPETITION THE WEST SHOULD JOIN WITH THE FRONTLINE STATES
AND THE OAU IN MEETING FORCE BY FORCE, OR APPLY SO MUCH ECONOMIC
PRESSURE THAT SMITH WILL BE FORCED TO SURRENDER.

3. THE TRIP CAN BE BENEFICAL FOR OWEN IF HE IS TOLD THE HARD FACTS OF THE EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO CRUSH SMITH AND COMES TO APPRECIATE THAT EVEN WITHOUT BRITAIN THE REBELS WILL BE DEFEATED BY GUNS OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS. THE EDITORIAL ENDS ON THE NOTE THAT FROM THE RIGHT PERSPECTIVE TIME-WASTING EXERCISES, SUCH AS AN EXPLORATORY MISSION BY OWEN, ARE "A CIRCUS WHOSE ONLY VALUE IS THEIR ENTERTAINMENT VALUE". END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL
COMMENT: THE EDITORIAL SHOULD BE READ AS PART OF THE GRZ' EFFORT TO SET THE STAGE FOR OWEN'S VISIT. IT SERVES TO FOCUS PUBLIC ATTENTION ON THE GRZ' BACKING OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE BUT DOES NOT RULE OUT WHAT WE BELIEVE IS THE PREFERRED GRZ OPTION -- NEGOTIATIONS. IT ALSO IS A WAY OF PUTTING OWEN ON GUARD, INDICATING THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS ARE TO BE PURSUED IN A MEANINGFUL MANNER, THE BRITISH MUST BE PREPARED TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO AFRICAN DEMANDS. END CONFIDENTIAL
LOW

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LUSAKA00952
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770125-0645
Format: TEL
From: LUSAKA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770470/aaaacilv.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3cc62fa7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2845664
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TIMES OF ZAMBIA SEES LITTLE OF VALUE IN OWEN VISIT TO SOUTHERN AFRICA BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, PINT, RH, ZA, UK, (OWEN, DAVID A L)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3cc62fa7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009